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Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 20301 011844Z

44
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
---------- 069260
R 011835Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3765
AMEMBASSY MADRID
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 20301

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP, GW
SUBJECT: FURTHER SPD VIEWS ON PSOE

REF: (A) BONN 19758; (B) MADRID 8990

1. SOURCES IN SPD HEADQUARTERS HERE TELL US THAT THE SPD IS CONTINUING ITS CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH THE PSOE IN ADVANCE OF THE LATTER'S CONGRESS. THOSE SOURCES, OBVIOUSLY VERY SYMPATHETIC TO THE PSOE, ADDED THE FOLLOWING (ON A MOST CONFIDENTIAL BASIS):

--THE PSOE HAS TOLD THE GERMANS THAT IT HOPES THERE WILL BE A LARGE MAJORITY FOR THE UPCOMING REFERENDUM, SINCE SUCH A MAJORITY WILL HELP STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN.

--DESPITE THIS, THE PSOE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY ASK ITS FOLLOWERS TO ABSTAIN. IT DOES NOT WISH THEM TO VOTE "NO", SINCE THIS WOULD WEAKEN THE POSITIVE OUTCOME. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PARTY LEADERSHIP DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE PSOE, AS A TECHNICALLY ILLEGAL PARTY, CAN ASK ITS FOLLOWERS TO VOTE "YES." IT IS HIGHLY DOUBTFUL THAT THE PSOE LEADERSHIP WOULD BE ABLE TO CHANGE THIS POSITION BETWEEN THE END OF ITS CONGRESS
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AND THE DATE OF THE REFERENDUM.

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--THE PSOE IS PREPARED TO WORK WITH THE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW MOST INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATING WITH THE PARTIES OF THE CENTER AND THE RIGHT. AFTER THE CORTES DEBATE, THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE READY TO TALK TO THE PSOE.

--THE PSOE LEADERSHIP CANNOT MOVE TOO FAR TOWARD THE GOVERNMENT WITHOUT ALIENATING A BASE THAT IS MORE RADICAL THAN THE LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, THE LEADERSHIP WILL TRY TO MODERATE THE MEMBERSHIP'S POSITION OVER TIME.

--BRANDT WILL NOT ONLY ATTEND THE PSOE CONGRESS IN MADRID BUT WILL ALSO MEET WITH THE KING AND WITH SUAREZ. THE KING ASKED BRANDT TO CALL AT A TIME WHEN THE PSOE CONGRESS WAS IN DOUBT; THE SPD ACCEPTED WITH ALACRITY, TYING THE CALL TO BRANDT'S ATTENDANCE AT THE PSOE CONGRESS IN ORDER TO HELP REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT WOULD FORBID THE CONGRESS.

2. THE S PD IS ENCOURAGED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN SPAIN BUT REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT THE LONG-RANGE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY THERE. THE S PD BELIEVES THE SPANISH RIGHT KNOWS IT WILL WIN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS, ESPECIALLY UNDER THE CONTEMPLATED ELECTORAL LAW, AND IS THEREFORE PREPARED TO ACCEPT DEMOCRATIC FORMS OF GOVERNMENT. THE REAL TEST WILL COME, THE SPD BELIEVES, IF AND WHEN THE RIGHT BELIEVES THAT IT MIGHT BE TURNED OUT OF POWER BY A POPULAR VOTE.

3. THE SPD OFFICIALS HAVE GIVEN US (ALSO ON A MOST CONFIDENTIAL BASIS) THE TEXT OF THE PSOE CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AS PREPARED BY THE PSOE EXECUTIVE. THE LANGUAGE ON DEFENSE MATTERS REMAINS AS WE REPORTED IN PARA 5 OF REF A. IF AMEMBASSY MADRID DOES NOT YET HAVE THE TEXT, PLEASE ADVISE AND WE CAN CABLE HIGHLIGHTS.
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